

**Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of
Pakistan to the United Nations. Public Meeting of the Security Council on
the Situation in Guinea Bissau (19 June 2003)**

At the outset, I would like to thank the Russian presidency for holding this timely and very opportune public meeting on the eve of the Security Council mission to the West African subregion, which will have Guinea-Bissau as its destination. I would like to thank Ambassador Aguilar Zinser for agreeing to lead the mission to Guinea-Bissau. I would also like to join other speakers in the pleasant duty of expressing our gratitude to Mr. David Stephens, the Representative of the Secretary-General, for presenting the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Guinea-Bissau. I would also like to thank Ambassador Kumalo, whom we are pleased to have with us again today for his comments as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau of the Economic and Social Council as well as Ambassador Johnson for his remarks as Chairman of the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau. We have also heard some very pertinent comments here from the Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau, on which the Council will need to reflect.

The importance of post-conflict peace-building and social and economic rehabilitation, reconstruction and development has been recognized as an essential requirement for durable peace and security. At the United Nations, Member States are trying to evolve ways and means to respond to the requirements of countries like Guinea-Bissau. The coordinated efforts of the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council in the case of Guinea-Bissau have opened the window for further strengthening and institutionalizing the United Nations response at the intergovernmental level to complex crises and situations that are characterized by inter-linkages among the security, political, cultural, social, economic and developmental dimensions.

One way of developing a comprehensive approach to such complex crises would be to build on the existing cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. As my delegation suggested earlier, we could establish ad hoc composite committees, with membership drawn from the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Such composite committees could generate a coherent and mutually supportive response to complex conflicts and crises that involve multifaceted challenges, such as those in Guinea-Bissau.

If Guinea-Bissau is to be prevented from relapsing into conflict, which is a real fear at this time, we must act quickly and judiciously. The response of the international community, spearheaded by the United Nations, to the peace-building and developmental needs of Guinea-Bissau should constitute a determined effort, based on principles but displaying operational flexibility. Of course, the primary responsibility rests with the Government of Guinea-Bissau. It must take steps to address the multifarious challenges in all areas — including those in the political, social, economic, governance, human rights and other fields. The partnership approach recommended by the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau constitutes a well-considered strategy that we fully support. We hope that the Government of Guinea-Bissau will seize the opportunity that this partnership approach offers. We also hope that it will take the necessary steps to facilitate a constructive dialogue with the international community.

In our view, progress could be made if both the Government of Guinea-Bissau, on the one hand, and the international donor community, on the other — including the Bretton Woods institutions — were to place the interests of the common people — the citizens of Guinea-Bissau — above all other considerations. Social and economic issues need to be addressed simultaneously with political and security matters. Some way ought to be found to provide

assistance to countries facing special circumstances, such as Guinea-Bissau, despite their structural and political problems. We must heed the advice coming from sensible quarters that it is timely for the international community to take the bold step to invest a little now in the peace-building effort in Guinea-Bissau rather than facing the prospect of spending much more in peacekeeping and enforcement in case — God forbid — that country were to relapse into conflict.

The joint mission of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council to Guinea-Bissau later this month offers an opportunity to reassess our approach to the situation. The presidential statement to be adopted today contains a balanced message addressed simultaneously to the Government of Guinea-Bissau and to the international community. That message will provide the mission with a good basis to work to achieve common ground between the concerns of the Government and the donor community. In that way we hope that the Council will advance the twin agendas of peacekeeping and development in Guinea-Bissau